

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----131706Z 104298 /41

O 131619Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1884

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 PANAMA 3415

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DEPARTMENT ALSO PLEASE PASS AMBASSADOR JORDEN

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PN
SUBJECT: TREATY NEGOTIATIONS - LANDS AND WATERS

SUMMARY: ACCORDING TO PANAMANIAN LANDS AND WATERS
TECHNICAL GROUP, ESCOBAR AND ROYO APPEAR TO BE
RETURNING TO PANAMA WITH A "POSITIVE" ATTITUDE. KEY
ISSUES IN THEIR CONSULTATION WITH TORRIJOS WILL BE
NEUTRALITY/DEFENSE, NATURE OF ENTITY AND LANDS AND WATERS.
TECHNICAL TEAM DESCRIBED UNDERSTANDING HERE OF WEDNESDAY
U.S. PRESENTATION ON LANDS AND WATERS, BUT SAID CERTAIN
POINTS APPEARED "VAGUE" OR MISUNDERSTOOD. TWO MEMBERS
OF TECHNICAL TEAM WERE TOLD TO BE PREPARED TO RETURN
TO WASHINGTON FROM FARALLON ON FRIDAY WITH ESCOBAR AND
ROYO TO CLARIFY SUCH POINTS. THE TWO REMAINING HERE ARE
TO ASSURE PRECISE TRANSMISSION OF THIS INFORMATION TO
TORRIJOS. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY OFFICERS MET WITH ALL FOUR MEMBERS OF
FABREGA'S TECHNICAL GROUP ON LANDS AND WATERS THURSDAY
AFTERNOON, AT THEIR REQUEST.

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2. ALTHOUGH GROUP'S UNDERSTANDING WAS SELF-ADMITTEDLY
PARTIAL, THEY CONSIDERED THAT ESCOBAR AND ROYO WERE
RETURNING WITH A "POSITIVE" OVERALL ATTITUDE AND FELT
THEY WOULD SEEK TO PRESENT AN UNPREJUDICED VERSION OF
WHAT THEY UNDERSTOOD OF U.S. POSITIONS ON ALL ISSUES
TO TORRIJOS. KEY ISSUES WOULD INCLUDE NEUTRALITY/DEFENSE

AND NATURE OF CANAL ENTITY (NEITHER OF WHICH TECHNICAL GROUP APPEARED FAMILIAR WITH IN DETAIL), AS WELL AS LANDS AND WATERS. TORRIJOS WOULD ALSO BE TOLD U.S. HAD ACCEPTED 1999 AS TERMINATION DATE FOR NEW TREATY.

3. THEY FEARED THAT THERE MIGHT BE SOME MISUNDERSTANDING AMONG THEIR SUPERIORS ABOUT EXACTLY WHAT U.S. HAD SAID ON LANDS AND WATERS. THEY DESCRIBED THE CURRENT UNDERSTANDING HERE OF WEDNESDAY'S U.S. PRESENTATION ON LANDS AND WATERS AS FOLLOWS:

A. RAILROAD - PANAMA TO MANAGE RAILROAD IN ACCORDANCE WITH WHAT IS ESTABLISHED AS JOINT PORT AUTHORITY AND FOLLOWING STANDARDS OF OPERATION ESTABLISHED BY U.S.

B. HOUSING - U.S. DESIRES TO ESTABLISH A COMMON REGIME OF COORDINATION; U.S. SHALL HAVE, WITH PARTICIPATION BY PANAMA, AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH CRITERIA OF REVERSION WHICH, IN PERIODS OF FIVE YEARS, SHALL PERMIT TRANSFER TO PANAMA OF ALL HOUSING AREAS. A MIX OF AMERICAN AND PANAMANIAN RESIDENTS IN THESE AREAS SHALL BE MAINTAINED.

C. ANCON HILL - ENTIRE SUMMIT (CONO) OF ANCON HILL WILL BE RETURNED TO PANAMA AT ENTRY INTO FORCE OF TREATY, EXCEPT FOR CERTAIN EXISTING INSTALLATIONS SUCH AS SCHOOLS, HOSPITAL, ETC.

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D. ALBROOK AFB - RETURNED TO PANAMA AT ENTRY INTO FORCE OF TREATY IN ACCORDANCE WITH DELIMITATION INDICATED ON CURRENT MAP, EXCEPT FOR CERTAIN MILITARY INSTALLATIONS.

E. COCO SOLO - DEVELOPED AREA SOUTH OF CRISTOBAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE RETURNED TO PANAMA WITHIN FIVE YEARS.

F. TRAINING AREA OF FORT SHERMAN - U.S. IS DISPOSED TO EXCHANGE (BAMBIAR) THIS AREA FOR ANOTHER UNDER A REGIME OF MILITARY COORDINATION.

G. PORT TO CRISTOBAL - TO REVERT ENTIRELY TO PANAMA FROM ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE TREATY, EXCEPT FOR CERTAIN MILITARY INSTALLATIONS.

H. PORT OF BALBOA - THE SAME. (APPARENTLY U.S. IS AGREEABLE TO ADMINISTRATION, WITHIN A REGIME OF COORDINATION, OF MOVEMENT OF TRAFFIC WITHIN PORT AREAS AND ON THE COURSE OF THE CANAL.)

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1885

S E C R E T SECION 2 OF 2 PANAMA 3415

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I. ANCHORAGES - U.S. ACCEPTS PANAMANIAN PROPOSAL
TO ELIMINATE AREAS AT BOTH ENDS OF CANAL AS CANAL
OPERATING AREAS AND CHANGE THEM TO AREAS OVER WHICH
U.S. SHALL ONLY HAVE RIGHTS OF ANCHORAGE.

4. THE FOREGOING UNDERSTANDING WAS BASED ON A REPORT
OF WHAT HAD BEEN PASSED DOWN HERE (NOT DIRECTLY TO
TECHNICAL TEAM) AFTER WEDNESDAY SESSION. IT WAS
EVIDENT TO THEM THAT U.S. HAD TAKEN SOME FUNDAMENTAL
DECISIONS, BUT THEY COULD NOT DETERMINE WHAT THESE
WERE -- SEVERAL POINTS APPEARED EITHER "VAGUE" OR
GAVE RISE TO MISUNDERSTANDING. GROUP MEMBERS SAID
FRANKLY THEY WERE CONFUSED AND WERE NOT SURE WHETHER
CONFUSION AROSE FROM VAGUENESS IN U.S. PRESENTATION--
INTENTIONAL OR OTHERWISE, MISUNDERSTANDING BY THOSE ON
PANAMANIAN SIDE WHO HEARD AND TRANSMITTED IT, OR
BOTH.

5. EXAMPLES OF UNCLEAR POINTS THAT AROSE DURING
CONVERSATION: ITEM ON RAILROAD PRODUCED JOKING BY
OTHER GROUP MEMBERS WITH CANO (DIRECTOR
OF PANAMA NATIONAL PORT AUTHORITY) THAT HIS AGENCY
WOULD NOW HAVE TO BECOME "NATIONAL PORT

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AND RAILROAD AUTHORITY". PROPOSAL ON HOUSING WAS NOT CLEAR. THEY WONDERED WHICH MAP WAS REFERRED TO IN MENTION OF ALBROOK, AND WHICH INSTALLATIONS. DID U.S. MEAN TO EXCHANGE SHERMAN TRAINING AREAS FOR ANOTHER LOCATION ELSEWHERE, OR TO ACCEPT PANAMA'S DELIMITATION ON MARCH MAP OF A REDUCED AREA OF MILITARY COORDINATION WITH DEVELOPED AREAS OF THE FORT REMAINING A DEFENSE SITE? WAS U.S. PROPOSING A JOINT PORT AUTHORITY SEPARATE FROM ENTITY FOR MARINE TRAFFIC CONTROL, OR WAS "REGIME OF COORDINATION" INTENDED TO MEAN, AS PANAMA HAD SUGGESTED, COORDINATION BETWEEN CANAL ENTITY AND PANAMA NATIONAL PORT AUTHORITY?

6. IN ORDER TO SEEK CLARIFICATION OF THESE AND OTHER POINTS, OMAR JAEN AND ARNOLDO CANO HAD BEEN DIRECTED TO GO TO WASHINGTON; THEY WERE TO BE PREPARED TO LEAVE DIRECTLY FROM FARALLON VIA PANAMANIAN AIR FORCE AIRCRAFT WITH ESCOBAR AND ROYO ON FRIDAY. THE TWO TEAM MEMBERS REMAINING HERE, FLAVIO VELASQUEZ AND AUGUSTO ZAMBRANO, ARE TO MAINTAIN DIRECT CONTACT WITH JAEN AND CANO, AND TO ASSURE PRECISE COMMUNICATION TO TORRIJOS OF U.S. POSITION ON LANDS AND WATERS.

7. ALL MEMBERS HOPED THAT U.S. TECHNICAL TEAM WOULD BE PREPARED TO COOPERATE IN CLARIFYING U.S. POSITION ON THIS ISSUE FOR THEM.

8. THE EMBASSY STRESSES THAT THE TECHNICAL TEAM KNOWINGLY EXCEEDED ITS AUTHORITY IN MAKING AVAILABLE TO US THIS DETAILED EXPOSITION OF THE CURRENT UNDERSTANDING HERE OF THE U.S. POSITION ON LANDS AND WATERS. THEY MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEIR SOLE PURPOSE IN DOING SO WAS TO FACILITATE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE TECHNICAL TEAMS OF THE TWO SIDES. FOR THIS REASON, NO DIRECT REFERENCE SHOULD BE MADE TO THE FOREGOING, EXCEPT PRIVATELY TO
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MEMBERS OF THE PANAMANIAN TECHNICAL TEAM THEMSELVES, UNLESS OTHER PANAMANIAN NEGOTIATING TEAM MEMBERS VOLUNTEER KNOWLEDGE OF THIS CONVERSATION. VIOLATION OF THIS CONFIDENTIALITY WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE SERIOUSLY COMPROMISING TO THE PANAMANIAN TECHNICAL GROUP MEMBERS.

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